

HEARTH, Opening Doors and considerations for transitional housing

Tri- County Prevention Learning Opportunity
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HEARTH

- Homeless *Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition* to Housing
- From the HEARTH Preamble:
“to establish a Federal goal of ensuring that individuals and families who become homeless return to permanent housing within 30 days”
HEARTH Act Purposes – Sec. 1002(b)

Opening Doors Federal Plan Goals

- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in 5 years
- Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in 5 years
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children in 10 years
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

Opening Doors Objective for Local Communities

“Transform homeless services into crisis response systems that prevent homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing.”

Core Concepts of HEARTH and Opening Doors

Programs → Systems

Activities → Outcomes

Homeless before help →
Preventing

Transitioning → Quickly Rehoused

HEARTH Act Performance Criteria

Reduce the number of people who become homeless

Reduce length of time people spend being homeless

Reduce returns to homelessness

Increase jobs and income

Thoroughness in reaching homeless population

Other accomplishments on reducing homelessness

Reduce Overall Homelessness

Lengths of Homelessness

- Transitional housing stays range from community to community; typically 4 months to 2 years
- In many communities, people enter transitional housing from other programs (especially shelter) adding to the lengths of homelessness
- About one-third of transitional housing participants leave for something other than permanent housing.

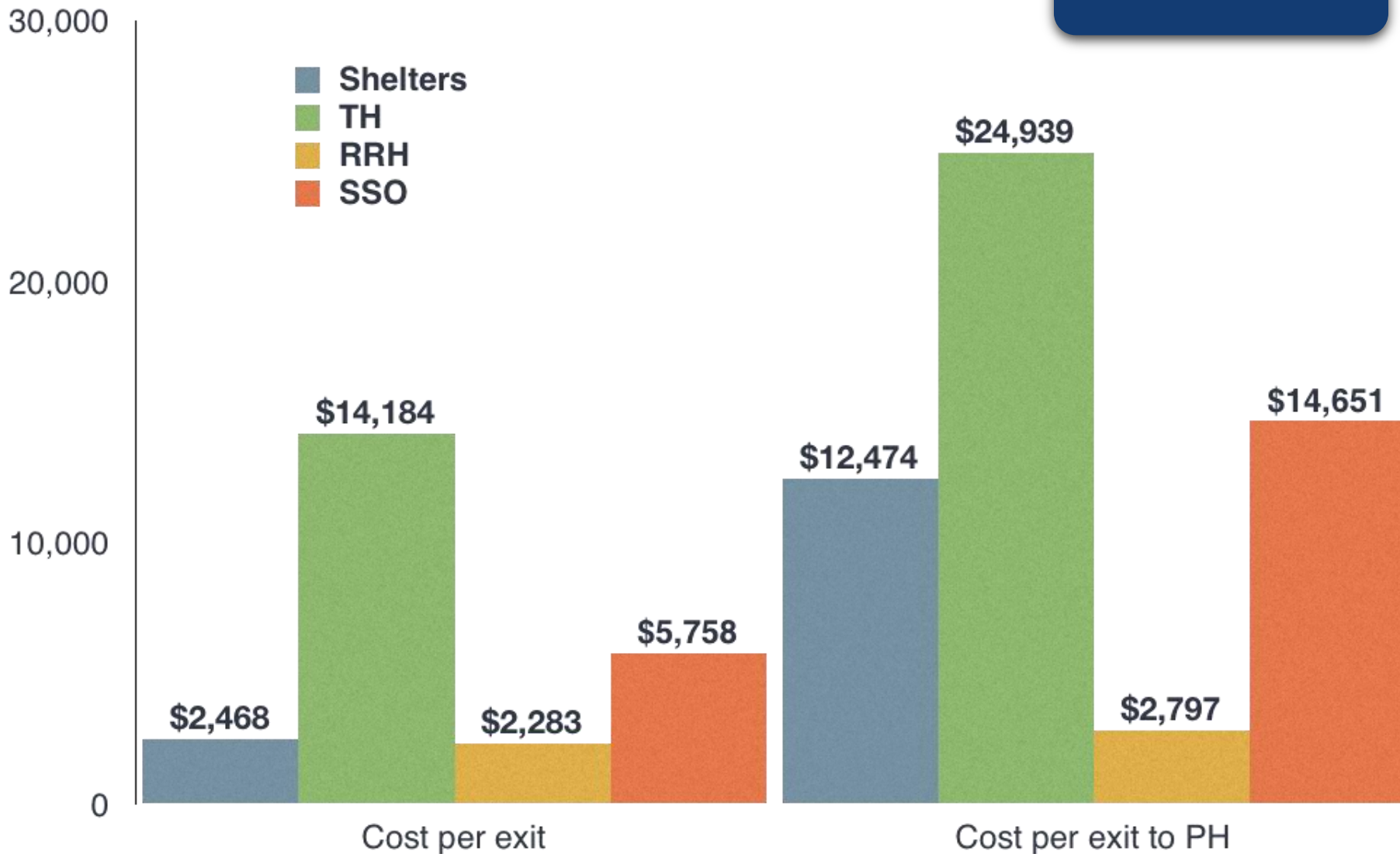
Transitional Housing is Expensive

In a recent multi-site study of costs associated with first time homelessness:

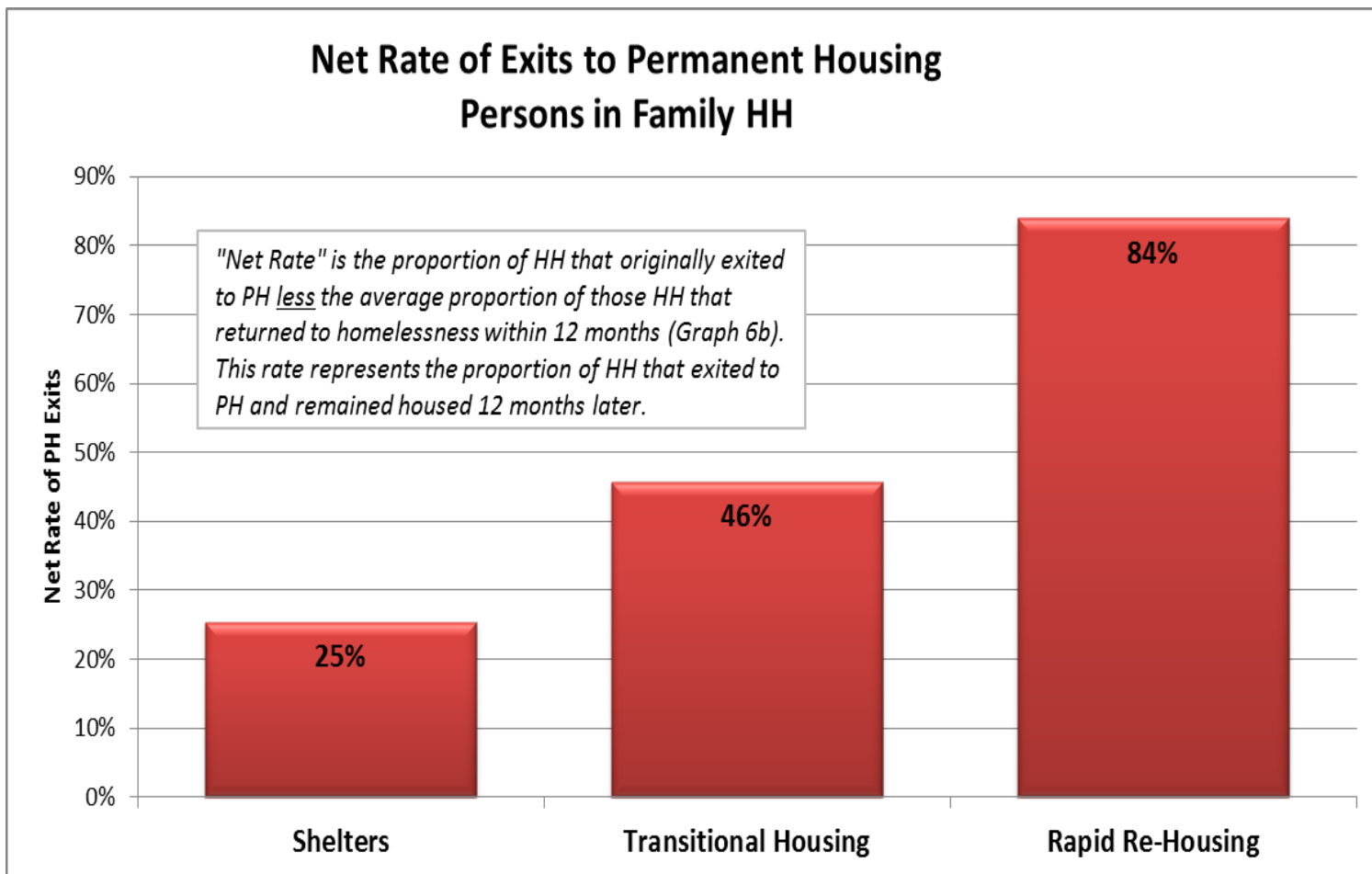
- 24% to 42% of first-time homeless families used transitional housing (exclusively or in combination with emergency shelter or –infrequently – permanent supportive housing) for an average of 8 to 18 months.
 - For these families average homeless system costs per household in most sites = \$15,500 to \$38,742
 - People who leave transitional housing for permanent housing typically don't have much higher incomes than when they entered transitional housing
- 47% to 82% of homeless system costs are associated with families who had long stays in transitional housing

Cost Effectiveness of Interventions for Individuals and Families

**Sample
Community**

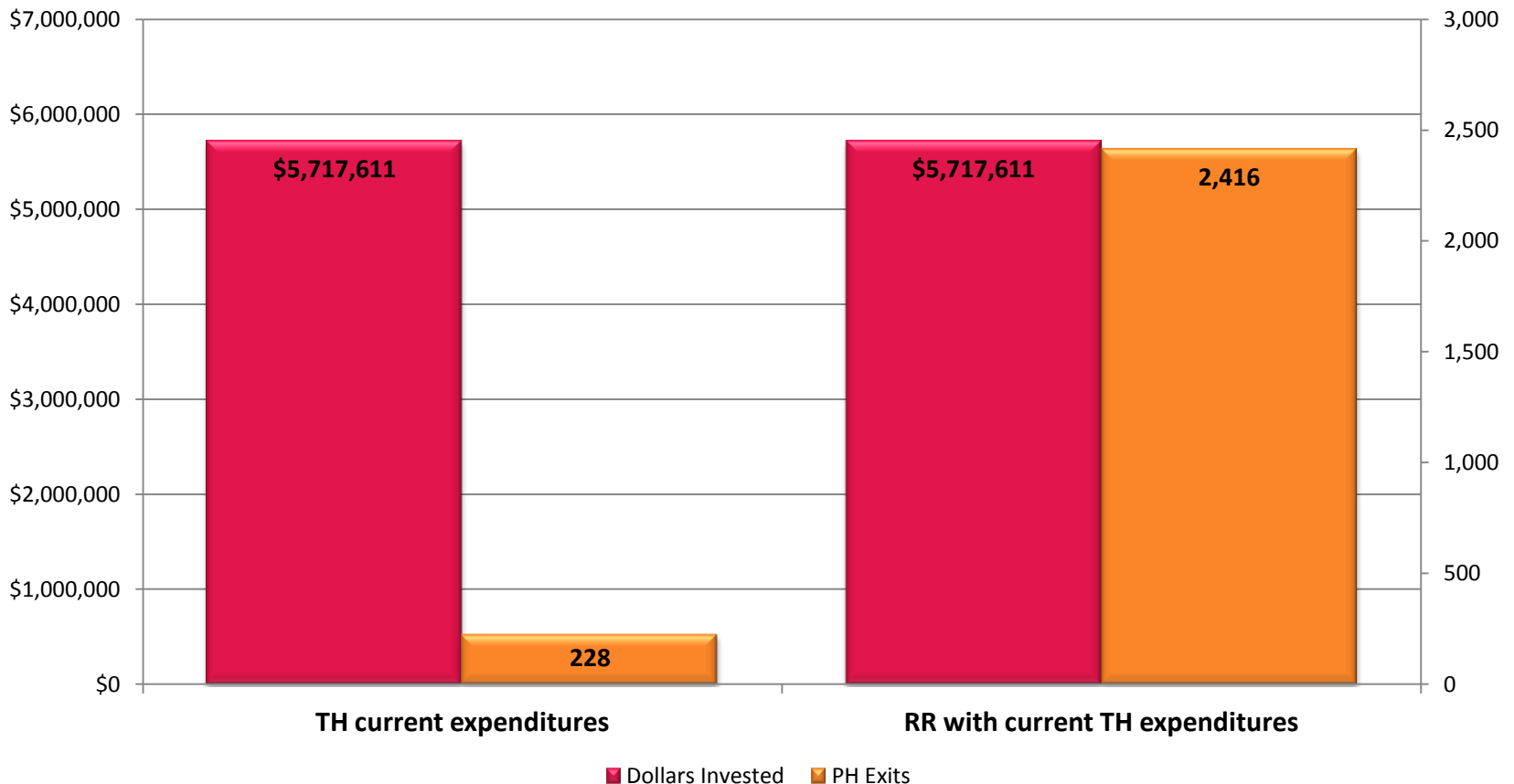


Comparative Effectiveness



Reinvesting our dollars will buy more exits

Current and Potential Impact of TH Investments

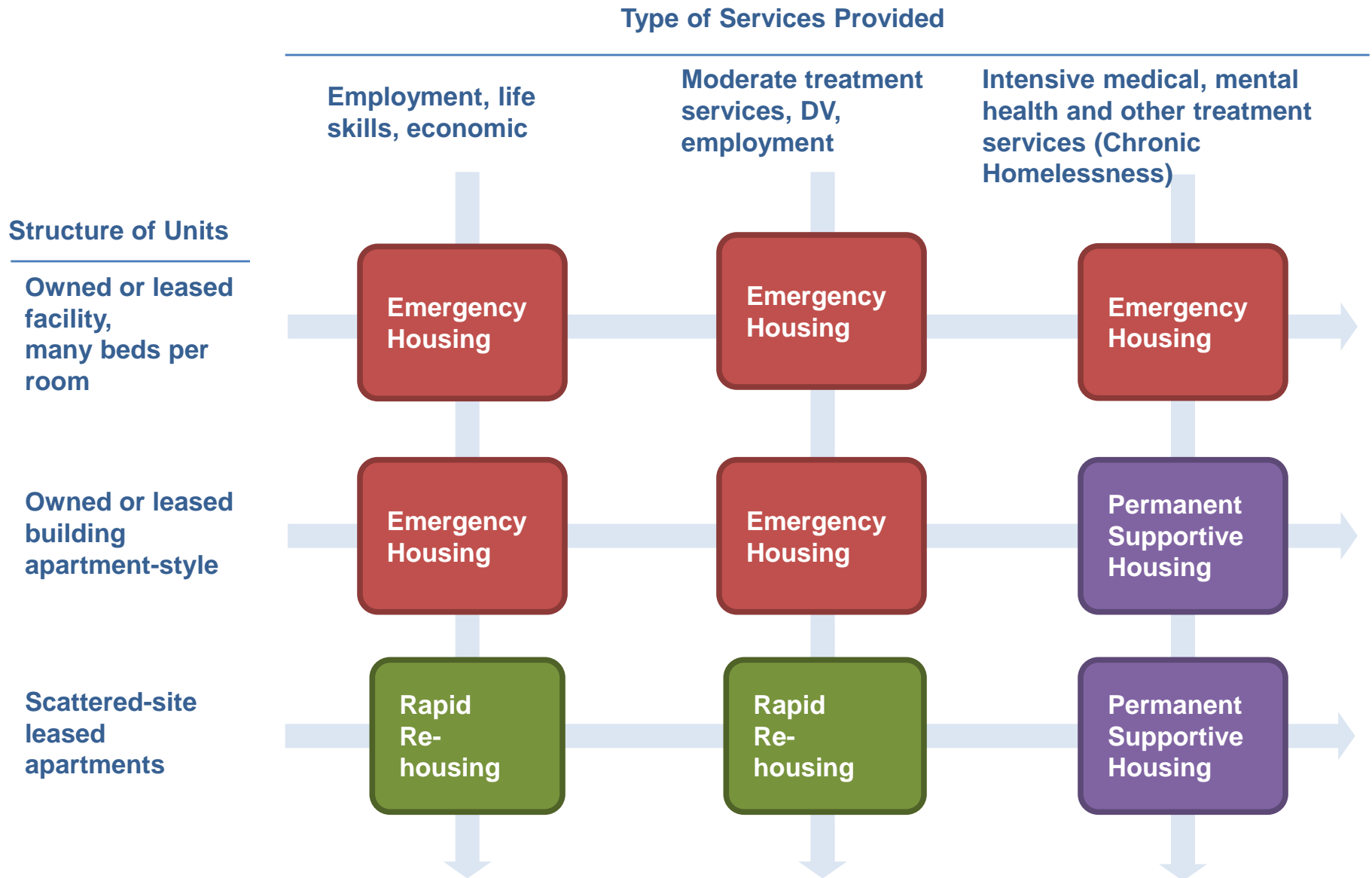


Is there anybody who *needs* transitional housing?

- *People with active substance abuse issues or in recent recovery?*
- *Domestic violence survivors?*
- *People who need medical respite care?*
- *People with mental illness leaving restrictive facilities?*
- *Transition-age youth?*

What Should Transitional Housing Become?

What Can we do with Transitional Housing?



Conversion Considerations: Structure and Funding

- Facility(ies) – if there are buildings for the program, what is their layout? quality? What are they most suited for? (If congregate, can you just move people through faster??)
- Contractual/Legal – what are you current Regulatory agreements and/or Zoning restrictions?
- Funding – will the current resources still be available if the program changes? Are their replacement sources?
- What about cash?? (Should you sell?) **(Also consider regular permanent affordable housing- especially if some service funds could go to rapid rehousing...)*

Conversion Considerations: Program and Culture

- For shorter/more rapid programs:
 - New focus on housing barriers and a housing orientation; other issues secondary (if at all...)
 - Relationships with landlords; ability to provide subsidy and housing related -support
 - Getting clients linked to services in the community
 - Becoming mobile to serve clients in the community after they leave (*IF NECCESARY*);

Culture change: From “Come in and get comfortable...” to “How are we going to get you out of here?!”

Conversion Considerations: Program and Culture

- For permanent supportive housing:
 - How different will the population be? What kind of service/staff changes needed?
 - Experience with housing functions: rent, leases, tenant's rights, evictions
 - Legal and financial changes

Culture change: *from “you get to stay here if you do ...” to “You live here. how can I help?”*

**(Also consider regular permanent affordable housing- especially if service funds could go to rapid rehousing...)*

It Takes Time

You need a plan.

- Understand best practices; Establish outcomes
- Develop program design with staff, consumer, stakeholder input
- Board and donor education and buy-in
- Staff training/hiring
- Transition phase (especially to PSH)

We don't know yet how HEARTH will facilitate conversion; under current SHP rules conversion to PSH can takes 2-3 years.